

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

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CHAPTER THREE

The Brazen Altar

Now OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO EXODUS 27 AND, AS YOU read and consult the picture in the front of this book, we shall study together the Brazen Altar.

We have already considered the general overall picture of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness: its outer court, curtained off by curtains of pure, white fine-twined linen, and its one gate of entrance with a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet.

SALVATION FROM SIN

Now we consider the first article of furniture in the Tabernacle, placed inside and near the one gate of entrance, namely, the Brazen Altar.

Coming to the Brazen Altar is the first step a sinful man must take on his way to the Holy of Holies, where he can stand before GOD pardoned, cleansed, and able to have fellowship with Him. [32]

Now, come with me to the one gate, and let us push back the blue, purple, and scarlet curtain and enter in.

There before us stands the Brazen Altar, and on the hot coals lies the sacrificial lamb which has been slain and its blood sprinkled above the Mercy Seat.

This is typical of CHRIST: who Shed His blood and gave His life that we might be forgiven.

Sacrifice is God-ordained.

When Adam and Eve sinned and were driven out of the Garden of Eden, GOD gave them coats of skin. Innocent animals had to give up their lives in order to obtain those coats.

Cain and Abel, sons of Adam and Eve, both had heard the way of approach - the way a sinful

man could come to a Holy GOD. Abel believed GOD's Word; he came to the altar with a substitute, a spotless lamb. The lamb was slain, the blood applied, and an offering was made as GOD ordained. GOD had respect unto Abel's offering because it was a blood sacrifice. Fire came down and consumed the offering. Cain also had heard of GOD's way of approach. But he preferred to come in his own way, so he brought the fruits of his own labor. GOD did not have respect unto his offering and did not testify to it by consuming fire.

After the flood Noah built an altar before he built a house.

Abram in Genesis 12 built an altar before he pitched the tent.

Are you putting GOD first in your life? Have you come to the Brazen Altar - the Cross of CHRIST - GOD's one and only way of reconciliation? [33]

You may be highly successful in business, with good health, a lovely family, everything favorable from a worldly standpoint, but if you have not come to the Cross of CHRIST for forgiveness you are dead and spiritually separated from GOD. If you come to the moment of death not reconciled to GOD and die in your sins, you will be forever separated from Him. It is an awful thing to contemplate.

What do we learn from the Brazen Altar as we approach it? GOD's Word says that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and upon this Brazen Altar, back in the Old Testament days sacrifices were consumed by fire.

This teaches us that sin is punishable by death. The soul that sinneth shall surely die.

It also teaches us that an innocent substitute must die in the sinner's place. The slain lamb, the goat, the bullock were Israel's substitutes that shed their blood typical of CHRIST's atoning death on the Cross. So in the New Testament we find these words, "**Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

JESUS CHRIST, GOD's sacrificial lamb, died for your sins, for mine - died in your place, in my place.

If you would go home to be with the Lord, you must needs go by the way of the Cross. [34]

SALVATION BY GRACE ALONE

Now the Altar itself, standing in front of the one gate of entrance, was five cubits square. If you know anything about numbers in the Bible, you know that five is the number of grace, six is the number of man, seven is the number of perfection, eight is the new beginning, and so on. The number five runs throughout the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, indicating that by grace we are saved.

Note that the Altar was made of wood overlaid with brass. Wood speaks of the humanity of the Lord JESUS, GOD manifest in the flesh.

Brass is capable of enduring the fire. JESUS on the Cross was tested by the fires of GOD's wrath, and in that He revealed His perfection and sinlessness.

Second, the Brazen Altar stood upon the desert sands, not upon some high exalted place. It could be approached without effort. Get it! No steps to the Brazen Altar! No stepping stones to CHRIST, no works of merit are required in order to have reconciliation. Come sinner, just as you are!

I recall a sad sight which I saw in an eastern city.

An old woman on her knees was painfully toiling up a flight of about 350 stone steps. At each step she paused, saying a prayer. She did not know that salvation is a free gift of GOD if we come by JESUS CHRIST, GOD's way of approach unto Himself.

Oh, if all could know and if all would heed the outstretched arms and the gentle voice saying, **"Come unto me."**

SALVATION FOR ALL

At the four corners of the Altar were horns, and the horn in Scripture denotes power and strength. [35]

It says, **"Bind the sacrifice with cords, with the horns of the altar, and so the burnt offering sacrifice was bound to the altar."**

My Lord on the morning of Calvary was nailed to the Cross.

Hands and feet were pierced and He was bound to the Cross as the sacrifice in Old Testament times was bound to the Brazen Altar. The horns pointed to the four corners of the earth.

I've said it once, and I repeat that whosoever will may come out of every tribe, kindred, tongue, and nation! JESUS will have His witnesses from all the earth before He comes again. Then do you know about the ashes of the burnt sacrifice?

When the sacrifice was completely consumed, the ashes were carefully removed, carried in a covered pan to a clean place outside the camp (Exodus 27: 1-9).

This proved that the fire of GOD's wrath was carried away.

Joseph of Arimathea begged that dear body - wrapped it in clean linen cloth and placed it in a new tomb where no corrupting flesh had ever lain. Then, showing His complete satisfaction, GOD raised JESUS from the dead.

This is the Gospel, the Gospel of grace, the Gospel which is the power of GOD unto salvation, and will you hear me, Christians? That is our main job, to get this Gospel out, to tell abroad the good news that CHRIST died for the sins of men, that He was buried, that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. Why be taken up with anything else? [36]

We are to warn men to repent and believe the Gospel or perish!

THE ONE WAY OF SALVATION

And now in closing, I want you to read a few verses from Hebrews 9 beginning at verse 11. See how clearly this refers to the Old Testament sacrifice.

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, [there you have the Trinity] purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Hebrews 9:26: **"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."**

He'll take your sins and put them behind his back never to remember them against you forever! How complete is the deliverance our GOD has provided for sinful man! [37]

Friends of mine, outside of CHRIST, with no peace in your heart, will you come GOD's way?

There are many sandy foundations that will not abide the storm of GOD's wrath in the days ahead. Only those upon the rock CHRIST JESUS will be free from the judgment to come. CHRIST died for your sins. Now He is saying to you that He is not willing that you should perish. Why not make this great decision today and receive CHRIST as your personal Saviour.

Out in the great radio audience, scattered across the nations of earth, - you may be hidden away in some lonely place - some desolate place - maybe on a sick bed - maybe behind prison bars - wherever you are, you can look up into the Father's face and say, **"God be merciful to me a sinner."**

And you can be assured that He hears you.

JESUS says, **"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."**

He will hear your prayer, He will save your soul if you will only let Him. [38]

~ end of chapter 3 ~

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